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STATINTL

Spy Time

Not since the public fantasied itself into Mata Hari's dangerous arms has spying enjoyed such a heyday of interest as now. Housewives and office drones, millhands and merchants exorcise the dreariness from their lives in the reckless pursuit of danger and intrigue—from the comfort of an armchair.

James Bond—fictional Agent 007 of the British Secret Service—runs sinister Soviet agents, master criminals and eager damsels to ground in a dozen novels and two (with more to come) movies.

While CIA intrigues in the spidery politics of South Vietnam are the subject of popular speculation, Allen Dulles, U2-era boss of the CIA, hints at all but reveals little in a published report on the nation's intelligence establishment.

Back on the fiction shelves, such perennials as "The 39 Steps" are fitted out in new bindings to slake a taste whetted by headlines that imitate art: Soviet diplomatic personnel stampeded out of the country by FBI counterintelligence. British army uses beautiful young women—insulated from risk by their skill in karate—as spies in war games.

Truth to tell, the business of organized sneakery, like other trades, is mostly routine work—culling through foreign publications, writing reports that rarely get read, punching the ol' time clock.

Wonder what the spies are reading for escape.